

(AN) APPEAL

TO THE CONSERVATIVE MASSES, NORTH AND
SOUTH, TO END AGITATION FOR OR
AGAINST SLAVERY, BY DECIDED
ACTION NOW.

In the midst of the flood of publications poured upon the country by rival presses,—in spite of the wild agitation of men's minds,—we venture to hope that a calm appeal to the union-loving, conservative masses of our country, may yet be heard. We have hitherto been of that unfortunately large class, who consider politics a thing for politicians, a trade, to be pursued by those and those only who have made up their minds to follow it, and a matter with which the great body of the community have little or nothing to do. But in the present canvass, there are claims of such magnitude as should induce every well-wisher to his country, every lover of this Union, every father of a family, in short, every man who has either a heart or a pocket, or both, to take a decided stand, and to do what little may be in his power, not only by vote, but also by argument, in conversation, and by the press, to induce every voter within his reach to use the power of that vote to further the true interests of the Union.

It is the class to which we have said, we have belonged,—those indifferent about politics,—whom we specially address. To such, the

old beaten tracks, the old beating, and sometimes beaten candidates, the old round of political squabbles, seem well enough; they have been going on all our lives, they have never done much harm nor good; why not, then, stick to the old candidates, the old round of politics? We have stated what we believe, with a very large class of voters, is the only reason why they contemplate voting for Mr. Buchanan, or Mr. Fillmore, and not for Col. Fremont.

Why not stick to the old candidates and the old round of politics? Now as to the latter, it will be enough to say, simply, there is no such thing. Let every thinking man answer truly, upon what ground do you intend to base your vote at the coming Presidential election?—Upon old issues of Whig and Democrat, upon Bank or tariff—public lands, internal improvements; or again, upon the more recent ones of favor or disfavor to our foreign population? The answer from ninety-nine hundredths would be, NO. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. One gigantic question now, necessarily and absolutely overshadows all else. Upon that, upon the question, shall or shall not our Territories be open to slavery, will the vote of this Republic be cast in November next. All other questions, except as they have a bearing upon this, are now of no moment whatever. The old round of politics is then out of the question, and old candidates are only to be viewed as they shape their course upon this the question of the day.

It is scarcely necessary to say, what all admit, that in the event of the election of either Mr. BUCHANAN or Mr. FILLMORE, the vote of the country would be cast in favor of extending the area of slavery; and should Col. FREMONT be elected, the territories will remain free. Here, then, is the issue. Are your minds made up on this point? and if so, is the point of such importance as to force every man to act upon it with decision and energy? Shall slavery be extended to the territories? To argue the matter fairly, we will consider it thus: Has this government a constitutional right to restrict slavery? Is it desirable and important to do so? Is it then expedient and our duty to do so.

We shall dismiss the question of constitutional right very briefly, for we do not think any man, North or South, can, in the face of previous actions of the government in the matter, sanctioned by the first statesmen and jurists, of all parties, deny the constitutional right. As to the new-born scheme of allowing a territory to make its own laws, carry the thing out. Slavery is not the only practice obnoxious to a large portion of this people. Suppose a territory settled chiefly by the holders of other peculiar doctrines. Such a territory applies for admission as a State. The common sense of the country rejects the application while holding such doctrines. What then is to prevent the people of the territory from saying, we are possessed of uncontrolled power to regulate our social institutions; we are bound, not by common law, nor by United States laws or customs, but only by the will and pleasure of the majority of ourselves; we will, there-

fore, inasmuch as to all intents and purposes we are sovereign and independent, *remain* what these new Democrats call a territory. Is there any constitutional power to force that territory to become a State? Is there any natural inducement for it to do so? Here, then, we have, as the legitimate and inevitable consequence of this squatter sovereignty, the actual, existent, disruption of this glorious Union. Truly, we might suspect Mr. Douglass to be the apostle of Utah. This, by the way, to clear our road before us. We say plainly, the right of restriction applies only to the territories. With the existence of slavery in the actual States, we have nothing to do. There it is forever shielded from *external* interference by our Constitution, and the conservative body of the North, which now resists extension, will put down, with an overwhelming force, outside interference in those States. And here let us point out, what an importance this gives to your present action. Missouri, Texas, once admitted as slave-holding States, their doom is sealed forever. Kansas once admitted, will stand unassailed, like Missouri or Texas. The time, then, for decision is even now passing, and will soon be gone; it will do no good to say in December next, "I wish I had seen all this before." We have nothing, then, to do with the question, how far the Congress of 1820 was wrong, when, in opposition to the whole North, and a great part of the South, it dared to admit Missouri; nor, with the admission of Texas, with its provision for four new States out of it. If those before us, and ourselves until now, actuated then and still by an undying paramount attachment to the Union, have been ready to yield every thing, short perhaps of the "call of the slave-muster roll at Bunker Hill," to concession, we honor them for it; the future was not disclosed to them. Like Clay and Webster, they thought each new attack of the slave power was the last. Time has shown their fallacy. It is for us, with the light of the year 1856, with the light of the fires of Kansas, to say what course we *now* will pursue.

Is it then important for the community to take a firm stand on this matter? We have been told in a recent address by Mr. Choate, if northern action on this subject were of any practical use, we might see good reason for that action. But Kansas is the last point, &c. &c. Eight years ago, three years ago, we all hoped and thought it would not reach so far. But now there is an organized, avowed policy, avowed at Cincinnati, by which Kansas, Cuba, large enough for two states, and the four states in Texas, may be added to the list. Seven already looming before us, and a policy advocated by which every State, formed out of the yet wild west, will either belong to the same class, or must be saved by blood. Is it possible any longer to hope, that any concession will be the last? Let any man read almost any southern paper, and no reading would on this subject be more instructive, and he will find that what we have charged is there daily advocated. The Richmond *Enquirer* of a late date says, "Repeatedly have we asked the North," "has not the experiment of Universal

"Liberty failed : are not the evils of Free society insufferable ? Free society, in the long run, is an impracticable form of society ; it is everywhere starving, demoralized, and insurrectionary. We repeat, "that policy and humanity alike, forbid the extension of the evils of free society to new people and coming generations." An Alabama paper says, "Free society ! we sicken of the name; what is it but a conglomeration of greasy mechanics, filthy operatives, small fisted farmers, and moon-struck theorists: all the Northern, and especially the New England states, are devoid of society fitted for a well bred gentleman." Any man, by going to a hotel or reading room, and looking over files of Southern papers, may see just such remarks.—Can any extreme of abolition rant be more absurd ? But the sad fact is, that while extremes will exist, while the world lasts, the South has put this small bullying ranting faction among them, small as we believe it is, into its high places, and invests them with its destiny.

But still further; to show the importance of action, upon what grounds is slavery in the abstract justified ?

The Bible reader will refer you to Patriarchal times ; the philosopher, to the necessities of humanity, by which some must be hewers of wood and drawers of water to others; the mercenary, and he is the only consistent one of the lot, will say it is profitable. Now is there any one of these reasons that will reach only the Black race ? Will they not suit the Indian Lascar, the Chinese Coolie; ay, even the *Free born White American citizen*? Consider this; is it not an infallible application of the doctrines of slavery? Whither does all this lead, a grasping, ambitious, reckless body of demagogues, holding the principle that slavery is right in the abstract, that color has nothing to do with it, wielding a power in their own States, which, but for the dread of Northern interference, might at this very moment disfranchise and enslave their own poor white citizens ; holding that the extension of the blessed institution is the duty of every man, and practically with Gov. Wise, that thereby the value of a slave will be raised from one thousand to three or five thousand dollars ; holding that by extension only, they can be secured to a distant period in the powers and profits now enjoyed, feeling that now, while the Northern mind is dim, unenlightened, and chaotic upon the subject, is the time, ere it awakes, to rivet State upon State, like plate armour upon the shield of slavery ; that now is the time to say to the conscientious, give us our rights ; to the timid, beware what you do ; to the avaricious and the sensual, cast in your lot with us ; to pour into the ear of the mighty North, the soft blandishments of the tempter, whisperings now, but such whisperings as the thunderings of Sinai would not heal in our childrens' day. Such schemers ask *you!* men,—not men of the North, for there should be no such distinction,—but MEN, lovers of the true interests of your country, and of the human race, to help them carry on their schemes.

Is it then important to awake to the necessity of excluding slavery from the territories now or never ?

Again, is it desirable to exclude it? Is slavery a blessing to a community? The proposition is so absurd, and we are so sure that every man, South or North, apart from mercenary motives in the one, and concession for Union sake in the other, will own at once the absurdity of introducing slavery into the temperate regions of the West, that we will not discuss the subject. To discuss it, would force us to enlarge upon its horrors, undeniable and undenied. The internal slave trade, the separation of families to an extent, totally ignoring the family relation; the avowed prohibition of the knowledge of reading, and of the Bible, because they are antagonistic to slavery; the existence of over three millions of people among us, systematically ground into a position, without the Bible, without property, without family, without anything that appeals to a man as above a beast; the debasing effect of slavery upon the white population. We will not stir these smouldering flames, this pestilential pool. Perhaps our poor brethren of Carolina and elsewhere, are for these very reasons, so anxious to escape from the spreading cancer among them; hoping to inoculate it in a milder form, upon our beautiful West. We will not, I say, enlarge upon these things. The Constitution has guaranteed their existence, and the country submits, and will continue to do so. God knows the South ere long will find enough to do within its present limits; and when the time comes, that South Carolina or Virginia seek aid from their Northern brethren, in the cause of humanity, the great heart of the North will not be touched in vain. Only in passing, we would say to the South, as Northern statesmen like Mr. Choate so often say to the North, remember, public feeling is not always what it should be. Your aggressionists are pursuing a course which forces the North to look into these horrors. It is easy saying, all this trouble is caused by the abolitionists; suppose that it were so; that the great states of Virginia and Kentucky, were deterred from following their own convictions of justice and self interest by the senseless howlings of a handful, (for till lately they were so,) of mad fanatics, far away in New England; suppose the abolitionists are the authors of the trouble; it is done; our duty now is to look the future calmly in the face. Do you think, the agitation of this subject, the attacks in your papers upon the honesty, the morality, the very decency, of society, at the North; the continual charge of abolition against those who despise it; are these things calculated to strengthen the conservatives of the North in their position, **THAT SLAVERY, ALTHOUGH AN ADMITTED EVIL, IS A SAD NECESSITY, WHICH MUST BE LEFT TO THE GOOD SENSE AND MANAGEMENT OF THE STATES WHERE IT EXISTS.** Let the Union-loving patriots of the South be wise in time.

We have now referred, first, to the constitutional right of restriction; then to its urgency—what we do must be done quickly; again, to its great desirableness. We now ask, is it expedient and our duty to exclude slavery from our western territories?

We fully believe the only question, with every northern mind, is, as to the *expediency* of restricting slavery.

To pass, for the present, the question of duty; to waive the consideration whether a nation, fearlessly and manfully doing its duty, has or has not upon its side the God of Justice; let us take a mere political view. The threat comes to us explicitly from the Presidential candidate of one party, and from the Vice Presidential of another; if Col. Fremont is elected, the South will secede. We will not stop to discuss the decorousness of such distinguished men traveling about the country, recommending their own wares by such sad threats against those who deal with their rivals; nor the propriety of polluting so glorious and holy a thing as this Union, which with reverence we say it, we believe to be God's own work, to be the vanguard of every thing great and glorious among the sons of men, by turning it into a temple of Mammon, where politicians are bought and sold. But what does all this amount to? In its best aspect it is an appeal to fourteen millions, begging them to be governed by six millions; to submit peaceably to what they, the fourteen, consider a monstrous abuse only to please the six!

Again, we have seen the importance to the nation of excluding slavery from the territories. Can any practical man show how the South is injured thereby? In the midst of all the vaporings, let us have one good reason for this mighty tempest. Is any great interest of humanity attacked; any noble truth undermiae'd; any beautiful fabric of national policy, to which other people turn, as to a landmark of hope, threatened to be swept away; is any Southern State, or the aggregate of them, affected, in its religion, its morality, in the physical improvement of its population, or their capacity for future greatness? Where is the damage? We look about everywhere, among the nobler instincts of humanity, for a reply, in vain. It is true, we have heard one, saying, give us the territories and slaves will rise in value from one to three thousand dollars. But we cannot believe this voice to be the authorized exponent of the honorable South.—We cannot believe humanity is to be outraged, God and man to be defied, and this Union shivered to atoms, to enable a few slave-breeders to drive their herds to a better market. No, thereby they would only break up their market, doing themselves all the North is about to do. Well, then, there is something to create this uproar. There is one prospective evil in this dreaded triumph of national interests, and we say it to both North and South; it is, that flushed with victory, the North may proceed to abuse its power by interference with slavery in the States.

Around the dread of this are clustered all the intensest feelings of the South. God knows, we would be the last to hold forth to the slave in a slave State, the least shadow of hope. Not only the prosperity, but the very existence of our southern brethren, would be at stake. In every sane mind, humanity to the white race, extinguishes

false humanity to the black; and as we have before said, the North wishes no interference there. But to the conservative men of the South we would say, you are taking the wrong way to secure yourselves. Seven years ago, the abolitionists were a contemptible handful. Everywhere they were put down by the strong arm; if it was whispered a man was an abolitionist, he was looked upon with a feeling of mysterious horror, as an enemy to all those beautiful things about us, protected by the compromises of the Union. Even yet, so far is the North from being abolitionist, that were a law properly introduced prohibiting the immigration of free or runaway blacks, it would pass in every Middle and Western State. The general feeling is, would that the Union was swept of the whole race. But the harsh scenes forced bayonetwise upon us, by the fugitive slave law, the overthrow of the Missouri Compromise, a submission to which had grown up with the present generation of voters; above all the recent scenes in Kansas, even though but the hundredth part is true, these things are fast changing the aspect of affairs. In place of habitual acquiescence, has come inquiry; in place of fraternal feeling, in too many cases, has arisen frenzy. Are you so well satisfied with the experiment of tampering with the Northern mind that you desire to proceed? You admit the North has the power; is it wise to goad a whole people, again and again, or would it be the part of wisdom, O Patriots and Union men of the South, to turn out your fire-eaters, your would-be founders of Black Republics, who say disunion *must* come,—let us secure all we can, ere the North is awake! Would it not be better for yourselves, to regulate your institution within yourselves, and to give up the new-born idea of indefinite extension? Are you not men like ourselves, and is it possible, you can if assured of internal tranquility, desire the extension of such a system as slavery, as anything good in itself; consider, then, how you will best secure that tranquility.—Decidedly by non-agitation. The great body of the North is conservative, and the same majority, which we trust will in November next, elect JOHN C. FREMONT, will, you may rely upon it, assist you if need be, as it now does Kansas.

This fear of future evil is, then, so far as it influences the action of the South, a fallacy, and we know of no evil, present or future, to be inflicted on any part of these United States, by the contemplated action of the Republican party in November. Why, then, must the Union be dissolved if Col. Fremont is elected? Ah, say some, the South is excitable. Excited! Poor human nature cannot guide itself by such cain counsels. Is, then, human nature different on the two sides of Mason and Dixon's line? Who is to guide the weak human nature of the North? The North is slow to action, yet already an increasing party says, anything is better than slavery extension. Here, then, Oh, time-server! Oh, timid backer of the boldest and most dangerous! take your choice. Is it not an easy cry, dissolve the Union! judge ye; which of the hosts marshalled before you means it! Can

you decide? One homely old adage will relieve you: honesty is the best policy. *Fiat Justitia, ruat Cælum.* Try the experiment of meanness. Either God has built up, on this western hemisphere, a glorious ruin, which another age will look upon as some mighty Coliseum, which, once a temple of beauty, became the scene of combat for wild beasts, where blood was shed as water, till stone toppled from stone, and nought but desolation was left; or else the conservative, intelligent, nobler masses, North and South, will unite as one, and we shall continue as we have begun, beautiful and fair among the nations. Permit extension now, and sooner or later the former must be our doom. Shape your course now, once and forever, by the Polar star of duty; look the evil firmly in the face; great as it is, a greater is beside it. Move on with the calm confidence of generous power, and, ere long, the troubled waters now surging around us will be passed.

Voters of the Union, look to your duty now!

SALISBURY TOWNSHIP,
LANCASTER COUNTY.